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NOAA Releases National Estuaries Restoration Inventory

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced today the initiation of the National Estuaries Restoration Inventory (<http://neri.noaa.gov>) that will track the progress made toward the goals of the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000. The inventory is an online tool to monitor restoration projects implemented around the country and will serve as a searchable source of information on restoration results. NOAA is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The Estuary Restoration Act set a goal of restoring one million acres of estuary habitat – including salt marshes, seagrass beds, oyster reefs and associated habitats – by the year 2010. The inventory will serve as a restoration information clearinghouse, providing details on restoration techniques and monitoring results.

“NOAA’s National Estuaries Restoration Inventory will make a huge difference in the effectiveness of estuarine habitat restoration,” said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “The inventory is thorough, comprehensive, accessible and an overall improvement in communicating how to improve the effectiveness of our projects.”

NOAA encourages project managers to use the inventory to track their projects, find new partnership opportunities, and locate other regional restoration efforts to assist in future restoration planning and design. NERI also provides on-demand reports on specific projects. NERI’s online features will be effective in increasing public awareness and promoting local participation in restoration projects.

Projects can be submitted to the inventory from federal, state, local and private sources provided the project goal is to restore ecosystem benefits to estuaries and associated habitats.

The inventory continues to grow through the efforts of various partners and by building upon existing federal and state tracking efforts. Future enhancements of the inventory will include an interactive mapping component, allowing the public to perform project searches and create customized maps.

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The inventory is a product of the NOAA Habitat Restoration Program, which works to increase the effectiveness and number of coastal habitat restoration projects. It plans, funds and implements restoration projects, advances the science underlying coastal habitat restoration and develops improved restoration technology. The program also transfers restoration technology and research and monitoring results through extension, outreach and education efforts. For more information, please visit the Web site at: <http://restoration.noaa.gov>.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. To learn more about NOAA, please visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.